The Focus Indicators are a subset of Indicators from the Model Classroom Teacher Rubric that represent high-leverage practices for supporting students’ academic and social-emotional needs and promoting an ant-racist, culturally responsive school environment.

By prioritizing a subset of Indicators, districts can establish shared expectations and supports for practice in key areas and better focus and streamline the evaluation process. Educators and evaluators can use this resource alongside the Educator Evaluation Implementation Resources to guide goal-setting, evidence-collection, feedback, support, and professional learning around high-priority practices.

Focus Indicators are informed by the following guiding principles, which reflect the unique context of teaching and learning in the year ahead:

• Prioritize the social-emotional wellbeing of students and educators as the foundation for effective teaching and learning
• Promote culturally responsive, anti-racist teaching and leading practices that disrupt patterns of inequities and systems of oppression against Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and multiracial communities.
• Provide all students with access to grade-level instruction and the supports they need to be successful
• Engage students and families in learning through meaningful partnerships

Each indicator page features:

1. Standard and Indicator Description
2. Key Practices, adapted from elements associated with the Focus Indicator to highlight practices of specific relevance to the unique context of the 2022-23 school year.
3. Focus Points for Feedback, Collaboration, and Support provide examples of specific practices within this context.
4. Supportive Resources
Overview

The Focus Indicators highlight high priority practices for anti-racist and culturally responsive teaching and leading. Because teachers and administrators depend on one another to be effective in meeting the needs of every student, the Focus Indicators for teachers and administrators are complimentary.

ADMINISTRATORS

- Curriculum
- Instruction
- Environment
- HR Management & Development
- Family and Community Engagement
- Continuous Learning

TEACHERS

- Curriculum & Planning
- Instruction
- Learning Environment
- Family Collaboration
- Reflection
- Professional Collaboration

STANDARDS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

I-A

II-A

II-B

III-A

IV D

I-B

II-B

III-A

IV A

IV C

GENERAL RESOURCES

- Supports and Resources for Educator Evaluation Implementation | DESE
- Massachusetts Blueprint for English Learner Success | DESE
- Culturally responsive teaching: What you need to know | Understood
- Acceleration Roadmap | DESE and TNTP
- Restart & Recovery: Considerations for Teaching and Learning | Council of Chief State School Officers
- A Restorative Approach for Equitable Education | Learning Policy Institute
STANDARD I
CURRICULUM, PLANNING, AND ASSESSMENT

I-A Curriculum & Planning
Knows the subject matter well, has a good grasp of child development and how students learn, and designs effective and rigorous standards based units of instruction consisting of well-structured lessons with measurable outcomes.

KEY PRACTICES

Uses evidence based, content specific pedagogical practices that enable students to develop and apply grade level knowledge and skills in authentic contexts.

Builds on and draws from knowledge of their students’ identities, skills, developmental levels, cultures, languages, and communities to inform curriculum and planning.

Skillfully implements curricular materials using evidence based, inclusive, and culturally responsive instructional methods and activities.

FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

► Leveraging high-quality, culturally responsive instructional materials as the starting point for tailored instruction
► Interrogating curricular materials for bias and supporting students to do so
► Planning outcomes-based units and lessons using evidence-based, inclusive, and culturally responsive instructional methods and activities
► Understanding how lesson goals, scope, sequence and tasks fit together to build student learning over time
► Constructing student-centered learning experiences that build on students’ assets—their identity, cultural and language background, interests, and aspirations—to make the learning relevant and engaging
► Integrating into units and lessons authentic opportunities to help students process and think critically about current and historical events, and the personal and sociopolitical issues that impact their communities and the world.
► Identifying necessary supplemental resources and/or tiered supports to ensure equitable access to the content
► Providing differentiated learning experiences that enable all students to exercise social-emotional skills
► Providing opportunities for student discourse and the development of students’ ideas, helping students craft an academic identity (not just "I'm learning about biology," but "I am a biologist")

RESOURCES

Acceleration Roadmap | DESE and TNTP
Accessing Grade Level Content | The Rennie Center
CURriculum RAtingS by TEachers (CURATE) | DESE
MASS Literacy | DESE

Guidance for Accelerating Student Learning | Instruction Partners
Jal Mehta & Sarah Fine | Jobs for the Future
STANDARD II
TEACHING ALL STUDENTS

Uses instructional practices that reflect high expectations regarding content and quality of effort and work; engage all students; and are personalized to accommodate diverse learning styles, needs, interests, and levels of readiness.

KEY PRACTICES

Engages all students as active learners of meaningful, standards aligned content.

Uses appropriate inclusive practices to make grade level content accessible and culturally relevant to all students and accommodate and support individual differences in all students’ learning needs, abilities, interests, and levels of readiness.

Supports students to think critically, ask questions, and analyze sources, perspectives, and biases in order to deepen learning and make connections between the content and real world problems and events.

FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

► Skillfully implementing high-quality instructional materials to enact evidence-based, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically responsive practice
► Providing equitable opportunities, supports, and scaffolds for all students to meet or exceed high expectations
► Using multilingual students’ native language(s) to support instruction, such as through cognates and translanguaging practices.
► Using appropriate inclusive practices, such as tiered supports and Universal Design for Learning principles
► Shaping learning and discussions around topics of interest to students that reflect multiple perspectives, cultural differences, and backgrounds and incorporate knowledge of students’ cultural background/practices
► Encouraging student agency and engagement by delivering content across multiple modalities, offering multiple entry points, and providing choice within assignments
► Focusing on inquiry and reflection as strategies for engagement and learning, ensuring all students can share ideas freely and take academic risks
► Challenging students to think about and consistently question why things are the way they are, including issues of identity, equity, power, and justice
► Creating opportunities for and encouraging students to see themselves as agents of social change and transformation
► Seeking out the perspectives, feedback, and voices of all students and families in the classroom learning community and incorporating those voices into decision-making around teaching and learning environments

RESOURCES

The Opportunity Myth | TNTP
Culturally Responsive Teaching & Leading | DESE
Universal Design for Learning Guidelines | CAST
Translanguaging | WIDA
Critical Consciousness: A Key to Student Achievement | Phi Delta Kappan

FOCUS INDICATORS FOR TEACHING | 2022-2023
STANDARD II
TEACHING ALL STUDENTS

Learning Environment

Creates and maintains a safe and collaborative learning environment that motivates students to take academic risks, challenge themselves, and claim ownership of their learning.

KEY PRACTICES

- Builds positive, caring relationships to ensure each and every student feels valued, respected, supported, and a sense of belonging in the classroom community.

- Creates and maintains a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where students positively contribute to their community.

- Provides opportunities for cooperative learning with diverse peers and equitable and culturally responsive academic discourse.

- Supports students to take ownership of their learning.

FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

- Prioritizing authentic, culturally-responsive relationship-building that centers students’ lived experiences
- Co-creating agreements, rituals and routines with students that build a safe, collaborative, and culturally responsive learning environment
- Modeling and reinforcing respect for and affirmation of differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges (self- and social awareness)
- Supporting students to navigate and address interpersonal conflicts as they arise, including those related to identity, equity, power, and justice
- Supporting students to take responsibility for the impact of their actions through equitable and logical consequences and use of restorative practices
- Interrupting moments of bias or racism, whether spoken or read, and using those moments to model for students how to understand and address them going forward
- Providing opportunities for students to routinely collaborate with peers in a variety of ways
- Regularly utilizing self-assessments, student surveys or other forms of feedback to check in on students’ learning and well-being
- Ensuring students receive regular feedback on work and participation using an asset-based feedback approach that includes making positive connections with students, acknowledging the difficulty of the task, affirming students’ ability to succeed, and providing specific feedback that advances learning
- Teaching students when and how to use resources independently and ask for help from adults and peers
- Creating opportunities for students to act as leaders in their classroom community

RESOURCES

- Safe and Supportive Schools | DESE
- Three Signature SEL Practices | CASEL
- Supporting Student Resilience and Well-Being with Trauma-Informed Care: Educator Self-Assessment & Planning Tool | Center for Great Teachers & Leaders
- Helping Students Heal from Trauma | Rennie Center
- Evidence-Based Strategies for Assessing Students’ Social and Emotional Wellbeing | Annenberg Institute & Results for America
STANDARD III
FAMILY AND
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

III-B Family Collaboration

Collaborates with families to create and implement strategies for supporting student learning and development both at home and at school.

KEY PRACTICE

- Leverages families' cultural and linguistic knowledge and expertise to support student learning.
- Engages in dialogue with families about what students are learning in the classroom and expectations for student success.
- Identifies and seeks feedback on, strategies and resources for supporting student learning and growth in and out of school.

FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

- Regularly reaching out and listening to families, in formal and informal ways, about their values and priorities for their students’ academic learning and experience in school.
- Connecting with families early on and using systems to maintain regular two-way communication throughout the year.
- Asking families for and honoring their communication preferences, including primary contact, time of day, frequency, language and method of communication.
- Providing opportunities for families to contribute to classroom decisions and initiatives (e.g., celebrations, routines), demonstrating understanding of and respect for different home languages, cultures, and values.
- Notifying family members in a timely manner about any concerns about their child’s learning or well-being.
- Collaboratively sharing concrete strategies for supporting academic learning and well-being at school and at home.
- Sharing information about learning targets, curriculum, and content that students are engaging with.
- Encouraging families of English learners to use their home language when supporting their children’s academic learning, reinforcing the message to those families that they can support and continue their children’s progress in their home language.
- Interrogating one’s own biases around family communication and learning more about students’ cultures and backgrounds to support strengths-based, culturally responsive communication.
- Regularly asking family members for feedback.

RESOURCES

- Strengthening Partnerships: A Framework for Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement in Massachusetts | Massachusetts Family Engagement Coalition
- MA Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals Self-Assessment | DESE
- Academic Partnering Toolkit for Teachers | Flamboyan Foundation
- Family Portal | DESE

FOCUS INDICATORS FOR TEACHING | 2022-2023
STANDARD IV
PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

IV-A Reflection

Demonstrates the capacity to reflect on and improve the educator’s own practice, using informal means as well as meetings with teams and work groups to gather information, analyze data, examine issues, set meaningful goals, and develop new approaches in order to improve teaching and learning.

KEY PRACTICES

- Continuously reflects on the effectiveness of instruction and how one’s identities, biases, and practices impact student learning and well-being, and works to improve practice, eliminate learning inequities, and support all students to meet or exceed grade level standards.

- Sets challenging, standards aligned and measurable professional practice and student learning goals, based on thorough self-assessment, analysis of student learning data, and feedback from students and families, that advance equity for all students.

- Seeks out and engages in ongoing cycles of professional learning to strengthen equitable practice and improve student learning, applies new knowledge and skills into practice, and monitors impact on student learning.

FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

- Recognizing that teaching after an extended period of disrupted schooling will continue to require new professional learning and adjustments to practice, and exercising self-care and compassion

- Adopting an inquiry-based approach to professional learning and reflection, and adjusting practice on a regular, ongoing basis

- Seeking and valuing input and feedback from colleagues, students, and families on the effectiveness of teaching and learning, and adjusting practice accordingly

- Regularly examining student data to identify disparate outcomes for particular students or groups of students

- Engaging in individual reflection on one’s own biases and the impact these may be having on student engagement, achievement, and relationship-building, and taking steps to ensure that all students feel valued and affirmed in the classroom

- Considering and responding to the ways that issues of equity and access have affected and continue to influence students’ learning experiences and environments particularly in relation to academic and social support systems

RESOURCES

SMARTIE Goals | DESE

Culturally Responsive Teaching: A Reflection Guide | New America

Culture in the Classroom | Learning for Justice

FOCUS INDICATORS FOR TEACHING | 2022-2023
Professional Collaboration

Collaborates effectively with colleagues on a wide range of tasks.

**KEY PRACTICES**

**Collaborates and communicates with colleagues on a wide range of tasks in support of shared goals for student learning.**

- Shares responsibility for schoolwide culture and learning expectations that promote an equitable and culturally responsive school community.

**FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:**

- Differentiating roles and responsibilities in adapting and implementing culturally responsive, standards-aligned units and well-structured lessons
- Collaborating around and sharing common strategies for supporting students to engage and learn, including strategies to build community, support their social emotional health and wellbeing, and honor their lived experiences
- Collaboratively planning with content/SPED/ESL teachers and other specialists to align instruction and coordinate supports for English learners and students with disabilities
- Collaborating around and sharing common family engagement strategies and supports for student learning to center and strengthen family engagement across grades and subject areas
- Collaboratively using data (e.g., attendance, assessment, student feedback, discipline) to identify and disrupt inequities in access, treatment, and achievement in and across classrooms
- Examining student work, analyzing student performance, and planning together appropriate scaffolds, interventions, and supports
- Consistently holding students to high expectations and school-wide policies, while interrogating those policies for bias and advocating for equitable expectations for all students
- Naming harmful practices, moments, and policies when they occur to ensure all staff and students feel safe and supported

**RESOURCES**

- Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading | DESE
- Collaborative Planning Templates for Content/ESL/SPED Teachers | Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence
- Culturally Responsive Teaching: A Reflection Guide | New America
- Collaboration: Working Together to Serve Multilingual Learners | WIDA
- Culture in the Classroom | Learning for Justice

**FOCUS INDICATORS FOR TEACHING | 2022 - 2023**